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Caucus Newsletter

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Arizona State Senate Republican Caucus

Weekly Newsletter

Welcome to the Official Arizona Senate Republican Caucus Newsletter! Stay informed with our weekly publication: Your go-to source for the latest session updates and insights. Get your news straight from the source and into your inbox every week!





Bills Targeting Criminal Illegal Aliens

By Senator Jake Hoffman

Several bills to support President Trump's efforts to protect Americans from rampant crime associated with criminal illegal aliens in our communities passed out of Senate committees this week. The AZ ICE Act, sponsored by President Petersen, ensures cooperation from Arizona law enforcement agencies with federal immigration authorities to enforce federal immigration laws. Similarly, I sponsored SB 1088 to require local, county, and state governments to comply with federal laws, rules, regulations, and orders pertaining to immigration and deportation. Lastly, I sponsored SB 1111 to provide Arizona law enforcement agencies with a bounty of \$2500 for each criminal illegal alien who is apprehended and deported. Criminal illegal aliens are committing violent and horrific acts, not only here in Arizona, but across the nation. Look no further than the tragic story of Laken Riley in Georgia who was brutally raped and murdered. We don't want these dangerous individuals on our streets.



Hobbs Vetoes Bill for Faster Election Results

By President Warren Petersen

The Governor is irresponsibly preventing Arizona from providing same-day election results. She vetoed [SB 1011/ HB 2703](#) this week, which would have sped up vote counting. This was a missed opportunity to increase voter confidence and reduce frustration on election night. The legislation had bipartisan support from Arizona counties, recorders, elections experts, and our constituents. Instead of working with Republicans in good-faith to provide much-needed reforms to our election processes, the Governor impeded all efforts to ensure Arizona can report the vast majority of votes on Election night. I promised our citizens that this legislature would be committed to making commonsense and proven changes to our election processes, and my colleagues and I remain resolved to achieve that goal. Status quo for our state's elections is not an option. Arizona should never again be the laughingstock of the nation for its woefully slow election reporting. Our caucus will be discussing sending the measure to the ballot for voters to decide in 2026.





Tackling Waste, Fraud, Abuse in Welfare

By Senator John Kavanagh

We're working to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of taxpayer dollars with legislation to address eligibility requirements and increase oversight for both Arizona's unemployment insurance and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP). Unfortunately, there are some bad actors who are fraudulently collecting these benefits, either by lying about their current living situations or their current employment status. With rising concerns over individuals wrongfully taking advantage of state and federal welfare programs, I sponsored SB 1071, and Senator Finchem sponsored SB 1296, to ensure these government resources are only provided to the Arizona citizens who need them most. Both bills passed out of committee with all Democrats voting against the measures. SB 1071 increases oversight of SNAP by requiring monthly evaluations of eligibility requirements for participants, including verification of employment records, income amounts, and job search activity. Out-of-state purchases with EBT cards will also be tracked. SB 1296 requires individuals to report weekly job searches to DES, and all claimants must conduct at least five job searches per week.



WELFARE



Reducing Financial Burdens for Retirees

By Senator J.D. Mesnard

One of my priority bills passed out of the Finance Committee that I chair at the Senate this week, which is one that would give a preferential tax treatment when it comes to retirement income. Arizona is one of very few states that does not impose a tax on social security income. I think it's the right policy move because as a retiree living on a limited income, saving a portion of that income for taxation just makes life that much harder for people. Plus, I also want to encourage Arizonans to save for retirement. SB 1371 would take the same policy that applies to social security, which is not taxing it, and apply it to all retirement income. That includes pensions, 401Ks, IRAs, etc. This bill has allowed me to highlight the political discourse on this idea of how to encourage people to save for their future. So, once someone reaches the retirement age of 67, we can make sure that the government doesn't benefit from the source of income that they are living on in their sunset years. I am hoping to get this bill over to the House for consideration next week!



Addressing Arizona's Housing Shortage

By Senator Shawna Bolick

Addressing Arizona's housing shortage while safeguarding private property rights is a top priority of mine. A bill of mine that prevents cities and towns from adopting rules and regulations that hinder development of single-family homes passed through the Regulatory Affairs Committee this week. SB 1228 blocks cities and towns from enforcing new regulations for the development of new single-family homes until June 30, 2028. This bill offers a clear path forward, allowing housing developers to proceed with confidence on new housing projects without fear of sudden regulatory changes. I believe this bill will stimulate housing construction, reduce regulatory red tape, and promote homeownership across the state. Arizonans are already facing hardship in an overinflated housing market. We need to remove restrictive government barriers that harm citizens, not create more. I look forward to seeing this bill continue its way through the Legislature and to the Governor for her signature.



Eliminating Discriminatory DEI Ideologies

By Majority Leader Shamp

Senate Republicans are working to support President Trump's efforts by removing illegal DEI practices from government and schools, with an emphasis on returning to a system where merit-based opportunities are prioritized above all else. [SB 1548](#) is a bill that I'm sponsoring to prohibit hiring policies that focus on sex, race, skin color, religion, and sexuality over qualifications, experience, and competence. Merit-based hiring ensures that the most qualified individuals are the candidates who are selected for positions within our government. SB 1694, sponsored by Senator Farnsworth, raises the bar in college education by withholding state funding from higher learning institutions who continue to teach discriminatory DEI courses to students. By removing any influence of radical DEI ideologies when making hiring decisions in the workplace, or in courses taught to students, we can ensure that all Americans are treated with respect. We are committed to eliminating policies that prioritize anything other than talent and hard work. Both bills passed their respective committees this week.

**Diversity
Equity
&
Inclusion**



Creating Safer Schools in Arizona

By Senator Kevin Payne

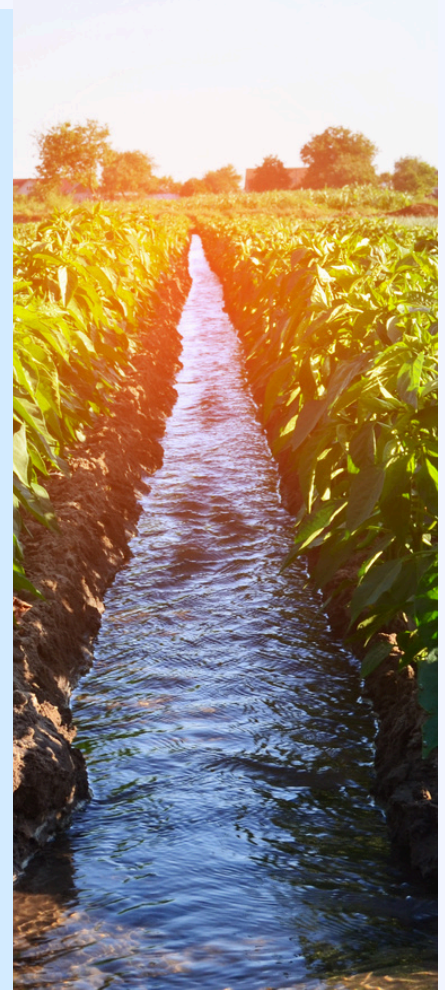
I am happy to share that my bill to expand the School Safety Program successfully passed through the Appropriations committee this week, bringing us one step closer to making Arizona schools more secure. With all of the tragic incidents happening on campuses around the nation, it's clear we need to be proactive in safeguarding our schools to prevent harm from reaching children in Arizona. SB 1233 will provide the necessary funding to cover the costs of placing school safety officers on campuses, as well as other resources like safety equipment, and infrastructure upgrades. Through this measure, any school that receives funding will be required to implement an emergency response plan to ensure the resources are used as intended. As Chairman of the Senate Public Safety Committee, protecting children in Arizona schools is an important mission to me. I believe this bill will create a pathway to secure schools and give parents the reassurance they need that their child is safe in their learning environments.



Efforts to Conserve Water in Ag, Housing

By Senator T.J. Shope

My bipartisan bill designed to help Arizona conserve water while increasing homebuilding to bring housing prices down for hardworking Arizona families passed committee this week. SB 1611 allows farmers to sell their land and water rights to developers who will in turn build for-sale housing to meet the needs of Arizona's growing population. We have a shortage of 270,000 housing units in Arizona, and housing uses less water than agriculture. This bill is a win-win for farmers and prospective homebuyers. Senator Dunn is working to promote water conservation and efficient farming practices with legislation to support Arizona farmers with resources to install on-farm irrigation efficiency systems. SB 1448 would allocate \$10 million to the "On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Pilot Program" to provide grants to farmers so they can upgrade to irrigation systems to ensure water is delivered in a more controlled, efficient manner. The goal is to preserve this precious resource while keeping costs manageable for farmers.



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Status



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